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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
STATES RELATIONS SERVICE.

A. C. TRUE, Director.

HOW TEACHERS IN RURAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS MAY
USE FARMERS' BULLETIN 642, TOMATO GROWING IN
THE SOUTH.

Range of use.—The South Atlantic and South Central States.

Relation to the course of study.—This bulletin may be used in the study of agriculture in connection with trucking or gardening. It is of special interest to pupils doing home work with tomatoes.

Topics.—The material should be grouped into five lessons for class study: (1) Soil—kind, preparation, fertilization, and rotation, pages 5, 6, 8; (2) starting plants—varieties, time, hotbeds, cold frames, growing young plants, pages 11, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; (3) field work—setting, cultivation, pruning, and staking, pages 6, 7, 8; (4) diseases and spraying, pages 9, 10; (5) the crop—harvesting, cost, yields, and returns, pages 10–12. Review summary.

Study questions.—Topic 1: What type of soil is best adapted to the growing of tomatoes? Is such a soil found in the community? If not, what type of soil is used for growing tomatoes? What precautions should be taken in selecting soil for tomatoes? Give directions for preparing the soil for tomatoes. What are the advantages of barnyard manure? How and when should it be applied? What fertilizing elements should be applied in addition to barnyard manure? What crops should be grown for green manuring? In communities where tomatoes are grown on large areas, what rotation is practiced? In cases where tomatoes are grown on small plats, what crops precede and follow? Prepare a three-year rotation of crops, including tomatoes.

Topic 2: What varieties are grown in the community? For what purposes are tomatoes grown? What methods are employed in starting young plants? Flats? Hotbeds? Give the steps in making a hotbed. How does a cold frame differ in principle from a hotbed? Give directions for caring for the hotbed from the planting of the seed to the removing of the plantlets. What is meant by "hardening off" young plants? How is this accomplished?

Topic 3: What is the community practice with reference to time of planting? Distance between plants? Distance between rows? How should the hotbed be treated before removing plants? Give the steps in transplanting tomato plants. What are the purposes of cultivating tomatoes? What implements are used? What advantages are to be derived from staking tomatoes? What method of staking is employed in the community? Give directions for pruning tomatoes.

Topic 4: What precautions should be exercised to prevent diseases? Make a list of the tomato diseases found in the community. What methods of spraying are employed? What sprays used?

Topic 5: What factors determine the stage at which tomatoes should be picked? What qualities should tomatoes have that are intended for market? What kinds of packages for shipping tomatoes are most commonly used? Compare the tables of cost on page 12 of the bulletin with the average cost of producing and marketing an acre of tomatoes in the community.

Illustrative material.—Secure well illustrated seed catalogues to be used in connection with the study of varieties of tomatoes. Specimens of all varieties of tomatoes grown in the community should be brought to school for study in connection with varieties. Specimens of diseased plants and fruits should be brought to school for identification and study. Make collections of insects that attack tomatoes.

Practical exercises.—(1) Make a survey of the school district to ascertain the following facts: The varieties of tomatoes grown, the acreage devoted to each, the total yield for each variety in bushels, the value in each case, and the total value of the yield of tomatoes in the community. Compare these figures with those for potatoes, peppers, and egg plants. (2) Utilize the canning club work as home work for the girls in the agriculture class.

Correlations.—Tabulating and compiling the facts and figures in exercise 1 give exercises in language and arithmetic. Make drawings of plants, parts of plants, fruits, diseased plants, and insects of tomatoes.

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